

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 AID-05 OMB-01 /065 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4794

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, RP

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MARCOS ADDRESSES ARMED FORCES

1. SUMMARY: ON SEPTEMBER 7, PRESIDENT MARCOS ADDRESSED THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES (AFP) AT A CERMONIAL PARADE IN HIS HONOR AT CAMP AGUINALDO. MARCOS REITERATED HIS INTENTION TO LIFT MARTIAL LAW, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT THE RETURN TO NORMALCY WOULD BE GRADUAL, CAREFUL AND CONDITIONED ON EVENTS IN MINDANAO AND MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER. HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

2. RETURN TO NORMALCY. MARCOS REMINDED THE AFP OF HIS PLEDGE THAT MARTIAL LAW WOULD ONLY BE TEMPORARY AND THAT THERE WOULD BE "RETURN TO NORMALCY" WHEN TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT. MARCOS SAID, "WE CAN NOW BEGIN TO REDEEM THIS PLEDGE, THANKS TO YOUR EFFORTS." HE SAID THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW DEPENDS ON A SOLUTION TO THE SOUTHERN SECESSIONIST QUESTION. HE EMPHASIZED, "THIS IS THE CRITICAL QUESTION. IF THIS CANNOT BE SETTLED, THERE WILL BE NO LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW." BUT ONCE THE MINDANAO CRISIS HAS ENDED, HE CONCLUDED, "WE WILL HAVE NO OTHER OPTION BUT TO RETURN TO NORMALCY." MARCOS ALSO CAUTIONED AGAINST OVER-OPTIMISM. HE NOTED THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT HIS PLEDGE TO END MARTIAL LAW. HE

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SAID HE WOULD NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOW A RETURN TO CHAOS AND DISORDER. HE SAID HE WOULD OBSERVE THE LIBERALIZATION EXPERIMENT CAREFULLY AND "IF THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF RETURN TO THE OLD VICES, I SHALL RECONSIDER MY DECISION TO RETURN TO FULL NORMALCY."

3. RELEASE OF PRISONERS. MARCOS ARGUED THAT THE TRNASITION

FROM MARTIAL LAW TO "NORMALCY" ACTUALLY BEGAN SOON AFTER SEPTEMBER 21, 1972. HE RECITED A LITANY OF LIBERALIZATION MEASURES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE DECLARATION OF MARTIAL LAW. HE PROVIDED FIGURES FOR NUMBERS OF PRISONERS RELEASED AS FOLLOWS:

1972 (LAST THREE MONTHS)	539
1973	28,250
1974	21,029
1975	8,937
1976	5,424
1977 (JULY-SEPTEMBER)	2,000

MARCOS CONCEDED THAT MOST OF THOSE RELEASED HAVE BEEN COMMON CRIMINALS RATHER THAN POLITICAL PRISONERS. HE ADDED THAT HE HAS ORDERED THE RELEASE OF ALL COMMON CRIMINALS DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGES. HE SAID THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN "SUICIDAL" IN THE PAST, BUT THE IMPROVED LAW AND ORDER SITUATION NOW MAKES IT POSSIBLE.

4. CURFEW. MARCOS NOTED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN OBJECTIONS TO THE RECENT LIFTING OF CURFEW, PARTICULARLY FROM WIVES AND MOTHERS. HE POINTED OUT THAT CURFEW MAY BE REINSTITATED IF NECESSARY. HE SAID THAT AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE MILITARY, IT HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED TO RETAIN CURFEW IN CERTAIN AREAS.

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5. ELECTIONS. MARCOS SAID ELECTIONS WILL NOT TAKE PLACE AT ALL LEVELS AT ONCE. HE SAID HE WOULD BE GUIDED IN THIS REGARD BY THE COUNSEL OF THE BATASANG BAYAN. HE REASURED HIS AUDIENCE THAT EVEN AFTER A NATIONAL LEGISLATURE BECOMES OPERATIVE, THE PRESIDENT WILL RETAIN FORMIDABLE POWERS.

6. COMMENT: MARCOS' SPEECH SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TAILORED PRIMARILY TO REASSURE THE MILITARY THAT HE HAS NO INTENTION OF ALLOWING THE LIBERALIZATION MEASURES ANNOUNCED OVER PAST TWO MONTHS--RELEASE OF PRISONERS, LIFTING OF CURFEW AND TRAVEL BAN, LOCAL ELECTIONS NEXT YEAR--TO UPSET THE LAW AND ORDER GAINS OF MARTIAL LAW. MARCOS LINKED THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW MORE DIRECTLY TO A SOLUTION TO THE MINDANAO PROBLEM THAN IN THE PAST, INDICATING THIS IS NOW THE MAJOR ISSUE THAT STANDS IN THE WAY OF A RETURN TO NORMALCY.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 07-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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